

Exaggeration Expressions of Arabic used by University Instructors and Students: The Case of Ajloun National University

Dr. Mahmoud A. Al. Sobh

Associate Professor

Ajloun National University, Jordan

Department of English Language and Literature

Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate Arabic exaggeration expressions that are used in congratulation and the influence of the variable of gender on using such expressions. The participants were 23 instructors and 22 BA Jordanian students at Ajloun National University. This study is based on the quantitative (questionnaire) approach. Participants were asked to complete the five Likert scale questionnaire according to their frequent use of the exaggeration expressions. The researcher used frequencies, percentages, means and three way ANOVA to analyze the data. The findings of this study reveals that the exaggeration expression, such as "Alf mabruuk, Mubarak" is the most prominent (mean 4.05) expression used by students and instructors, it got the highest agreement degree followed by "Alf alfrilyunmabruuk". The findings also reveal that exaggeration expressions are used on happy, social and religious occasions which people got used to using them, they become part of their customs and culture. They are used for encouragement, overstatement of numbers and providing addressees with a kind of happiness. The findings also reveal no statistically significant differences between male and female instructors and also students due to gender. Some recommendations were suggested.

Key words: Arabic Language, Exaggeration Expressions, Congratulation, Ajloun National University, Instructors,

There is no doubt that language is a means of communication that is used to express thoughts, attitudes and feelings. One can express his feelings whether they are likes or dislikes. He can also show his sentiments in social occasions, such as complimenting (Shbeitah, 2018). Compliments have different functions, such as congratulation, appreciation and motivations. Arabic Language is rich of exaggeration expressions, especially those used for congratulations in social occasions. People use such expressions intensified or exaggerated to show people or things higher, better or worse than they really are. It is also a common use in conversation that people use diction to arouse their feelings of a good speech. Moreover, such expressions attract the addressees attention and they sometimes may be used for rhetorical functions.

Exaggeration is a statement or description that makes something seem larger better, worse or more important than it really is. (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2006:503). The semantic meaning of this word is "intensive", For example "I ne

Exaggeration came from a Latin origin which means "intensive" and to "accumulate" in 1533. The semantic meaning of this word is "emphasize", whereas it was used in 1850 to mean 'to enlarge abnormally'.

Congratulation is a social tradition in society. Jordanian speakers of Arabic use different terms and strategies to exaggerate in congratulation. (Khatbeh, AL-Abed AL-and Al sobh, 2018). Al-khatib (1997:167) states that congratulations are social acts the purpose of which is to keep good relationship among people. Marki Tsilipakon (2001) states that congratulations are the speakers' expressions used. Jordanians use different kinds of expressions where they congratulate each other, using different strategies, such as Which means (one thousand congratulations). (الف مبارك), (Alf mubark Can (2011:23) says that in congratulation, the speaker extends his feelings for a certain purpose, such as satisfying the social expectation. Holmes (2001:268) says that the speaker should speak in an appropriate kind manner with reference to relationship. Brown and Levinson (1987 : 70) consider congratulation_speech act as a positive politeness strategy.

There are many factors that determine using exaggeration in speech acts in different situations and occasions. Speech acts are very important as they describe our daily life communication. Christodoulidou (2011:143) states two kinds of hyperbole: Overstatement of Numbers and Quantity to show exaggeration in congratulatory

situations, such as: “Alf almabrook”. (a thousand thousand congratulations) a description in which someone tries to show something that is not possible to be expected to occur. There are few Arabic studies that investigated exaggeration expressions used on congratulation occasions.

Literature Review

Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016) investigates congratulation strategies used by Jordanian EFL graduates and the strategies of positive politeness in congratulation speech acts. Emery (2000) explored congratulating and commiserating in Omani Arabic. The researcher addressed Different functions and formulas of speech acts. He emphasized the distinction between old and young generations in terms of their choice of the appropriate formulas in context. Particularly, he conducted a study on greeting, congratulation and commiserating in Omani Arabic. The results showed that older women and men use expressions different from those used by the young. For example, on wedding occasions, older people use expressions “Allah ybbarikfe Al-omaar (God bless your life), whereas the younger preferred the expression “Mabrook” (which means congratulation).

Khalil (2015) investigated congratulations in Kurdish at Dohuk University. Data were collected by asking the participants who filled a DCT which includes 10 situations of happy occasions. The data were analyzed according to the congratulation strategy by Elwood (2004). Then, by Brown and Levinson (1987: 102-131). He found out that the highest strategy for male students was (thank + wish) and for female students was (thank) .

Mahzari (2017) conducted a study to examine the verbal and nonverbal responses used by Saudi Facebook users in congratulations on happy occasions on Facebook. He studied a total of 1.721 comments of congratulations and analyzed them qualitatively and quantitatively using frame-based approach. The findings showed that 23 verbal types of responses were used. However, the use of congratulations offered good wishes and praise.

Allami and Nekouzadeh (2011) explored the speech acts of congratulation used by Iranian Persian speakers through congratulations according to the Taxonomy of Elwood (2004). The researchers used the modified version of Brown and Levinson’s model of Politeness (1987). They used a DCT that included nine situations. The participants were fifty. Data analysis revealed that the prominent types of congratulation strategies used were Illocutionary Force Indicating Device, Offering good wishes, and Expressions of Happiness.

Basami and Soleimani (2016) explored the relationship between second language learners' proficiency level and the use of congratulation strategies. They used two sets of questionnaires, Elwood (2004). The subjects were 60 BA English language majors selected randomly. Results showed significant relationships between their levels of proficiency and their use of congratulation strategies.

Khatabeh, AL-Abed AL-and Al Sobh, 2018 conducted a study on exaggeration of expressions used by Jordanian Arabic speakers. The study investigated the effect the variables: age, gender and educational level in the use of these expressions in Jordan. To achieve the objectives of the study, they developed and used a questionnaire . The subjects of the study were 88 participants (males and females) who were selected randomly from the city of Irbid. The findings of the study revealed the most common exaggeration expressions that are used in congratulation , and the variables that affect the use of these expressions.

Can (2011) investigated the culturally conceptualizations of congratulation in British culture and Turkish culture using a corpus approach in an attempt to formulate cultural scripts for the per formative verbs using the Semantic Metalanguage Approach. The study started with the dictionary definitions of the per formative verbs (i.e., congratulate, tebrik etmek and kutlamak) and then the researcher used a corpus approach . Lexical forms were investigated for in various corpora (i.e., BYU-BNC, MTC, Google). A total of 47 dictionaries were looked up and 442 situations of congratulation, 339 situations of tebrik and 348 situations of kutlama were gathered from genres of newspapers and blogs. The analyses of the data aim to uncover the Qualitative and quantitative features of congratulations, tebrik and kutlama in British and Turkish cultures. were analyzed The results revealed that there are some cultural differences and similarities in the conceptualization of the speech acts of congratulation.

Alameen (2017) investigated the similarities and differences between Sudanese Arabic and British English congratulation speech acts. He investigated the occasions which require congratulation, and the influence of age in the choice of strategies used. She used DCT to collect data. The findings showed that Sudanese occasions require more congratulation than the British. Secondly, age is an influential factor that affect congratulations speech acts.

This study was conducted to give insights on exaggeration expressions used in congratulation and the influence of variables, such as education and gender on such expressions. Up to my knowledge this study might be one of few studies conducted on exaggeration expressions of Arabic in the Jordanian context, so this study will fill the gap and may provide Arabic language learners with some exaggeration expressions used in congratulation that reflect social cultural values .

Statement of the problem

Exaggeration of congratulation is expressions used by university students in Jordan so that things appear better than usual. However, few studies have been conducted on this issue. Therefore, this study comes to investigate exaggeration of congratulation expressions used by Jordanian university students and instructors to explore this phenomena and to provide information for scholars about the expressions used in Jordanian Arabic. Also this study will fill the gap of the related literature.

Purpose of the study

This study aimed at analyzing exaggeration expressions used in congratulation by Jordanian university students which will benefit scholars, students, educators curriculum and textbook designers.

Questions of the study

1. What are the exaggeration expressions used in congratulation by Jordanian university students?
2. What are the exaggeration expressions used in congratulation by Jordanian university instructors?
3. Are there any statistical significant differences between male and female Jordanian university students in using exaggeration expressions to express congratulation due to gender?
4. Is there any statistical significant difference between male and female Jordanian university instructors in using exaggeration expressions to express congratulation due to gender?

Significant of the Study

This study is an attempt to shed light on generation expressions used to express congratulation by Jordanian university students. It also familiarize learners and teachers with such expression and the way native speakers offer their congratulation to each other. Furthermore, the findings of this study may be a fruitful source for learners to be acquainted with the way people con perform congratulation speech acts . The findings can help EFL learners to overcome the difficulty of using appropriate congratulation utterances in various situations. It also provides curriculum and textbook designers with these expressions so that they can include them in textbooks for the sake of linguistic functions.

Limitations of the study

1. The study was conducted on Jordanian university students study at Ajloun National University. Therefore, overgeneralization results are restricted to Ajloun National university students and instructors in the first semester of the year 2021 / 2022.
2. The study investigated the use of exaggeration expressions used by Jordanian university students and instructors in congratulation situations, so overgeneralization of the results is limited to these expressions.

Participants of the study

Participants of the study were 45, instructors where 23(10 males and 13 females), whereas students were 22. Males (10 males and 12 females) were 20 while the females 25 they were randomly selected from the population of the study. Table (1) shows the sample distribution according to the demographic variables.. All of them are Jordanian Nationals whose native language is Arabic.

Table (1) Frequency and percentage for the participants according to study variables (n=45)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sample	students	22	48.9
	Faculty members	23	51.1
	Total	45	100.0
Gender	Male	20	44.4
	Female	25	55.6
	Total	45	100.0

Table (1) shows that:

- For Sample variable the highest percentage was (51.1%) for Faculty members, but the lowest percentage was (48.9%) for students.
- For Gender variable the highest percentage was (55.6%) for female, but the lowest percentage was (44.4%) for male.

Instrument of the study

To collect the data required, a twenty three item questionnaire was designed to find out the exaggeration expressions used in congratulation by Jordanian university students and an interviewing method was also used. Participants were asked to add other expressions not listed in the questionnaire, and mention the reasons for their use. Expression was chosen among the ones used by Jordanian people in social contexts. These expressions are used in Jordanian Arabic dialect. Participants were also asked to classify these expressions according to the occasions they are used to. To achieve the validity of the questionnaire, it was given to a group of professors at ANU to give their suggestions which were taken into consideration.

Data Collection and Analysis

Participants were asked to complete the five Likert scale questionnaire according to their frequent used of the exaggeration expressions. The researcher used frequencies, percentages, means and three way ANOVA.

Reliability Test

The total Cronbach alpha coefficient was (0.96) for 23 expressions used in contrition, which is a high stability coefficient to apply the study.

Scale questionnaire

Formed questionnaire final form of (23) expressions, the researcher used five Likert scale to include five degrees, were given Always (5), Sometimes (4), Not determined (3), Rely. (2), Ever (1), and by setting signal (√) in front of the answer, which reflect the degree of consent, it has also been relying on the following classification of the rule on the averages as follows:

- Less than the 2.33 Low agreement degree.
- From 2.34 to 3.66 Medium agreement degree.
- More than the 3.67 High agreement degree.

Validity

To achieve the validity of the instrument professors who are linguists at the department of English and literature at ANU were asked to give their comments and suggestions which were taken in to consideration.

Statistical treatment:

The following statistical treatments through statistical software packages (SPSS) version 25 for data analysis were used:

- Frequencies and percentage for demographic information.
- Cronbach-alpha was calculated to extract Reliability coefficient of the questionnaire.
- Means and standard deviation for expressions used in contrition and total means (n= 45).
- Means and standard deviations for expressions used in contrition according to gender.

- Independent Sample t. Test was extracted to explore the difference in the level of expressions used in contrition due to gender.

The findings

This study is based on the quantitative (questionnaire) approach to achieve the objectives of this study which aims to identify **Exaggeration Expression Used by Jordanian University Students**. The results were presented based on the study questions.

The current study sought to answer the following questions:

The first question: What are the exaggeration expressions used in congratulation by Jordanian university students ?

To answer this question means and standard deviations were extracted for “expressions used in congratulation” for Students sample; table (2) shows that.

Table (2) Means and standard deviation for “expressions used in congratulation "Students' sample” (n=22)

No	Expressions	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree	Rank
1	Alf mabruuk, Mubarak	4.05	1.43	High	1
2	Malyonmabruk	2.59	1.71	Medium	20
3	Alf alf trilyunmabruuk	3.59	1.568	High	2
4	Anta Sabx	3.00	1.75	Medium	10
5	Tert mnel farah.	2.86	1.38	Medium	11
6	Ahsan xamal amltu	2.32	1.06	Medium	22
7	Mesh ma3gwl		1.39	Medium	14
8	Mut mnel farah		1.25	Low	23
9	Bkiit men alfarah	3.00	1.31	Medium	12
10	Bitla3lak yaa3m	3.14	1.42	Medium	7
11	Bkiit men Sheddatt elfarah	2.86	1.28	Medium	15
12	Mubarak el ibdaa3	3.09	1.23	Medium	8
13	3afyah 3alyki	2.86	1.58	Medium	16
14	Mubarak lessadeeq alaziz	2.77	1.48	Medium	18
15	Ya 3asal, yukbiir	3.05	1.40	Medium	9
16	Tahaninaelharah	3.32	1.49	Medium	5
17	Yaruuh galby	3.36	1.43	Medium	3
18	Yaasad	2.77	1.48	Medium	17
19	Enbasatet men kul galby	3.00	1.45	Medium	13
20	Hatha khabar wala bmelyoun dinar	3.36	1.29	Medium	4
21	Kafw wadyb	3.32	0.84	Medium	6
22	Da3em mutaaleq	2.64	1.62	Medium	19
23	Ya gamar	2.55	1.65	Medium	21
Total degree		3.01	1.11	Medium	

The findings of this study reveals that the exaggeration expression "Alf mabruuk, Mubarak" is the most prominent (mean 4.05), it got the highest agreement degree followed by "Alf alfrilyunmabruuk", which got the second degree of agreement (3.59). The researcher believes that these expressions are used to a great extent in Jordanian social occasions, and this may be the reason why they got the highest degree of agreement. This shows over statement of quantity and number. The other expressions used got medium agreement degree where the means range from 3.59 (ya asad) to 2.64 (Da3em mutaaleq). Some of these expressions express impossible expressions to occur, such as "Kafw wadyb", yaasad".and yaqamar". These expressions cannot occur, but the meaning can be explained figuratively. , for example "yaasad" (you are alion) and "tertmmelfarah" (I flew because of happiness). Moreover, there are some expressions that offer a kind of encouragement and offer good wishes, such as "kafwwadyb", "ya3sal yakbiir", "3afyah 3alyk" and "Antaxabx". The researcher thinks that the reason for using these exaggerated expressions may be because they are used a lot of times by Jordanian people on happy occasions, such as weddings, getting a degree, religions and social occasions, They are related to customs and culture. This conforms with Emery (2000) and khatatbeh, Al-abd-Al-Hag and sobh, (2018).

Throughout the interview, students added exaggerated expressions other than those of the questionnaire:

"_Mashallah ماشاءالله"

"_Tabarak Allah تبارك الله"

_mbaarak مبارك"

_Allah ybarek be omrak الله يبارك بعمر ك

The State that these expressions clarifying that they are used a lot of Times on religious occasions, such as "Eid el Fitr" "Eid Al Adha" (congratulation on the blessings of the Eid) and (congratulation on the coming of Ramadan, the holy month), (congratulation in the occasions of New year) and Happy christmas"

These findings conform with AKram (2008), Emery (2000) and khatatbeh, Al-abed Al-Hag, and sobh (2018) that exaggerated expressions may be used on religious occasions

The second question: What are the exaggeration expressions used in congratulation by Jordanian university Faculty members? To answer this question, means and standard deviations were extracted for expressions used in congratulation for Faculty members' sample; table (3) shows that.

Table (3) Means and standard deviation for "expressions used in congratulation" "Faculty members sample" (n=23)

No	Expressions	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree	Rank
1	Alf mabruuk, Mubarak	4.65	0.71	High	1
2	Malyonmabruk	1.87	1.06	Low	23
3	Alf alf trilyun mabruuk	1.96	1.40	Low	22
4	Anta Sabx	2.48	1.31	Medium	19
5	Tert mnel farah.	3.17	1.19	Medium	10
6	Ahsan xamal ameltu	3.83	1.07	High	5
7	Mesh ma3gwl	3.61	1.16	Medium	7
8	Mut mnel farah	2.00	1.48	Low	21
9	Bkiit menal farah	2.83	1.19	Medium	14
10	Bitla3lak yaa3m	2.70	1.33	Medium	18
11	Bkiit men Sheddatt elfarah	2.74	1.01	Medium	16
12	Mubarak el ibdaa3	4.00	1.04	High	4
13	3afyah 3alyki	3.78	0.90	Medium	6
14	Mubarak lelsadeeq alaziz	4.39	1.03	High	2
15	ya 3asal, yukbiir	3.26	0.96	Medium	9
16	Tahanina elharah	3.13	1.14	Medium	11
17	yaruuh galby	2.74	1.29	Medium	17
18	yaasad	3.13	1.42	Medium	12
19	Enbasatetmenkulgalby	2.83	1.44	Medium	15

20	Hatha khabarwalabmelyoun dinar	3.00	1.48	Medium	13
21	Kafwwadyb	3.35	1.15	Medium	8
22	Da3em mutaaleq	4.22	0.67	High	3
23	yagamar	2.39	1.37	Medium	20
Total degree		3.13	0.80		

Table (3) shows that the highest means reached (4.65) .

This study reveals that some Arabic expressions are related to indicate religious expressions, such as (الف (مبروك / مبارك) , with the mean of 4. 65) which is the highest rank.

But the lowest means was (1.87) for expression No. (2) "Malyonmabruk"(one thousand congratulation), by low agreement degree, and total mean degree reached to (3.13), for expressions used in congratulationFaculty member's sample, by Medium agreement degree.

Concerning the second questions, the findings of the study revealed that the expression "Alf mabruuk, Mubarak" got the highest agreement degree with the mean of (4.65).

This is the most prominent expression used similar to the same finding related to students. Then comes "Mubarak lelsadeeqaluziz with the mean of (4.39) which also got a high degree of agreement The researcher thinks that the reason maybe because they are used a lot of times in social and religious occasions, such as weddings , getting a degree , promoting to a higher rank , getting a job , and people got used to them. This also expresses overstatement of number and quantity expressions. Expressions, such as "Alf mabruuk" and Alf Alfrilyunmabruuk"got top degree of agreement on the side of students as they are mostly used by the young who got used to them (expressions connected with million, trillion etc).

Some expressions got high degree of agreement, such as "Mubarak el ibdaa3" with the mean of (4:00).This gives a kind of encouragement from the teacher to the student which teachers got used to. There are other expressions that got medium degree of agreement, such as "3afyah 3alyk" and "Tahanina el harah" which also express a kind of encouragement. Other expressions got low degree of agreement, such as "mutmen eh farah" that people do not like to use in general as "mut" means "died" and most people do not like to use it in happy occasions, even though it is used figuratively as the participants mentioned in responses of the interview. These results agree with khatatbeh, Al-abad Al abed Al-Hag and sobh, 2018 on using exaggerated expressions on happy and religious occasions.

Instructors suggested some expressions through the interview, which are similar to those suggested by the students:

- _ Masha allah"
- _ Tabarakallah"
- _ Eids Mubarak"
- _ EidMiladsaiid"
- "Barak Allah fiik"
- _ SanahMubarakah"

They state that these expressions mostly related to religious occasions, such as Ramadan , New year, birthday, Eid El Fitr, Eid Al Adha.These findings also conform with AKram (2008),Emery (2000) and khatatbeh, Al-abad Al-Hag and sobh, 2018, that exaggerated expressions can be used on happy and religious occasions.

The expressions used have different agreement degree but not statistically significant between students instructors. But they reveal that students who are young people favored expressions, such as " Mubarak lel sadeeq alaziz" which got medium agreement degree with the mean of 2.77 ,

Where as instructors who are older favored expressions, such as " Mubarak lel sadeeq alaziz " which got high agreement degree by the faculty with the mean of 4.39 .This conforms with Emery 2000 in that younger people use different expressions from those used by the older people

The third question is : Is there any statistical significant differences between male and female Jordanian university students in using exaggeration expressions to convey congratulation due to gender ?

To answer the third question of the study, **Independent Sample t. Test** was extracted to explore the difference in the level of expressions used in congratulation due to gender; the tables below show this.

Table (4) The result of (Independent Sample t. Test) to explore the difference in the level of expressions used in congratulation due to gender

expressions used in congratulation	Gender	N	M	S. D	"t" value	Sig t
Students	Male	10	3.22	1.25	.852	0.404
	Female	12	2.82	0.99		
Faculty members	Male	10	3.06	0.50	-.367	0.717
	Female	13	3.19	0.99		

Table (4) shows:

- There are no statistically significant differences at $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ in the level of expressions used in congratulation due to gender "Students sample", whereas t. value reached (0.852) by Sig (0.404).
- There are also no statistically significant differences at $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ in the level of expressions used in congratulation due to gender "Faculty members sample", whereas t. value reached (-.367) by Sig (0.717).

Table (5) The result of (Independent Sample t. Test) to explore the difference in the level of expressions used in congratulation due to Sample (n=45)

Measurement	Sample	N	M	S. D	"t" value	Sig t
expressions used in congratulation	Students	22	3.00	1.11	0.460	0.648
	Faculty members	23	3.13	0.80		

Table (5) shows there are no statistically significant differences at $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ in the level of expressions used in congratulation due to sample, whereas t. value reached (0.460) by Sig (0.648).

Concerning question number three which asks about the statistically significant differences between male female instructors and students, the study reveals that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female instructors. The researcher thinks that the reason may be that they are mostly from the same region, which is the north of Jordan. They use such expressions on happy occasions as they have positive effects on addressees. But concerning the expression which got the lowest rank, the researcher thinks that people do not use it many times may be because this expression contains the word "mut" which means "died" even though it is used figuratively. People do not prefer the word "mut" in happy occasions. People use the "Tert mnelfarah" instead which got a medium means.

Recommendations

The present study suggests the following recommendations:

1- A comparative and contrastive study of exaggerated congratulation expressions in Jordanian Arabic and any other language may be a topic to investigate. 2- another study may investigate the use of exaggeration in congratulation in written forms in, social media, such as: Face book and Wattsapp. 3- Researchers should conduct more researches on the congratulation strategies used by other cultures and ethnic groups for the purpose of promoting cultural understanding.

These researches will help in reducing misunderstandings caused by misuse of the speech act of congratulation among people from different cultures and ethnic groups. 3- It is recommended to familiarize curriculum designers of including such expressions in Jordanian textbooks.

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